

Freeway talk canceled after planners back out

by **Colleen Sparks** - May. 14, 2008 12:10 PM
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A meeting next week about the proposed South Mountain Freeway has been canceled after state transportation planners decided not to attend, said John Rodriguez of the Lakewood Community Association.

The meeting, which was set for Wednesday at Pecos Community Center, would have given Lakewood HOA residents a chance to ask questions. An **Arizona** Department of Transportation study team has been looking at potential effects of the proposed freeway.

"Upon reviewing with members of the South Mountain Study Team previous meetings with your HOA and in light of the fact that ADOT has no new information to provide, we have decided to cancel our appearance at next week's forum," Tim Tait, an ADOT spokesman and study team member, wrote in an **e-mail** Tuesday to Rodriguez. "We would continue to recommend that community members use the project Web site - available at www.azdot.gov/ValleyFreeways - as a source of wide-ranging information on the study," including all material presented to the South Mountain Citizens Advisory Team.

Rodriguez is on the advisory team made up of a citizens who will eventually recommend whether or not to build the freeway. Rodriguez said he believes the ADOT-led team was "afraid to face Lakewood," a community that could lose at least 55 homes if the freeway were built. Rodriguez had also invited elected officials to the meeting.

The freeway would run along the Pecos Road

alignment in Ahwatukee Foothills and cut through South Mountain.

Tait said in an e-mail to *The Ahwatukee Republic* that the study team would focus on "the advisory team meetings as an avenue for community members to learn about the study."

"ADOT is committed to provide accurate and updated information as the process moves forward," Tait wrote.

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